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20 January 1966

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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State Dept. review completed

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*Nigeria: General Ironsi's new military regime now seems to have been accepted by army unit commanders and civilian leaders throughout the country.

Negotiations under way on 18 January between Ironsi and Kaduna army leader Nzeogwu were apparently successful. Major Katsina, the Ironsi-appointed military governor, enjoys Nzeogwu's support and on 16 January--and possibly even prior to the coup--was in Kaduna, according to the American consul there.

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The military governors [who] Ironsi named to head the country's other three regions have acknowledged his leadership. All are members of the dominant tribe in their respective regions, which should help them cope with any tribal unrest that may occur in the wake of the coup. It is not yet clear that Ironsi has won over all army officers in Lagos, but there is no evidence to support press reports that as many as 50 have been executed.

Although not proclaimed, martial law is in effect in the long-troubled Western Region, and Ironsi has announced his determination to curb disturbances there. Long-deteriorating conditions and food shortages have sent large numbers of people into neighboring Dahomey.

Otherwise, the country remains calm at the moment and Ironsi's interim government is beginning to function. Civilian life is returning to normal, despite some apparently temporary dislocations, and leading Nigerians from all regions have come out in favor of the new regime.

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Zambia-Rhodesia: [The US Embassy in Lusaka has again voiced its concern that a Zambian total boycott of Rhodesian goods and services within the next few months could wreck Zambia's economy.]

[The embassy fears that the alternate sources which can be developed before April would not maintain sufficient economic activity to hold off departure of the vital European labor force for the two or three months in which the British hope to bring down the Rhodesian Government. Racial violence by the unemployed of either race is another unsettling possibility.]

[Kaunda seems now to be under less pressure to impose full sanctions on Salisbury. Rhodesia has eased the tension somewhat by withdrawing its punitive surcharge on coal and coke. Furthermore the Zambian leaders, for the time being, seem more confident of British determination to crush Salisbury and are planning their additional sanctions with an eye to protecting their own interests. Nevertheless, some of these leaders may wish to apply a total boycott soon after mid-February, when Wilson reportedly told Kaunda he is willing to consult about its implementation.]

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Hungary: A worker demonstration and work stoppages are reported to have occurred in recent weeks in protest over price increases announced by the Hungarian regime in December.

[The US Embassy in Vienna has received a report that some 160 workers were arrested in early January in connection with the worker demonstration in a key Budapest industrial center. The legation in Budapest had earlier reported rumors of other work stoppages in mid-December in four plants, at least one of which is in Budapest.]

Negative reaction to the price increases has apparently been much greater than the regime anticipated. Recent arrests totaling eleven persons on charges of "plotting" and "inciting against the state" may have been connected with this discontent. The legation has heard there may have been from 70 to 100 arrests in this connection. Regime spokesmen have also resorted to issuing numerous statements and interviews defensively justifying the price increases and designed to counter popular discontent.

[There were reports of differences in the party prior to the adoption of the controversial measures. There are also indications that the regime's prestige has been seriously affected. Both factors will make it more difficult for the regime to proceed with any dispatch on the planned and necessary economic reforms with which the price increases are connected]

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East Germany: Seventy-two-year-old East German dictator Walter Ulbricht, officially reported to be suffering from a cold, has not been seen in public since 20 December.

This is the longest period Ulbricht has been absent from public view, except for vacations, since he spent three weeks recuperating from a cold in October-November 1963. A regime spokesman had predicted in early January that he would be publicly active by mid-month.

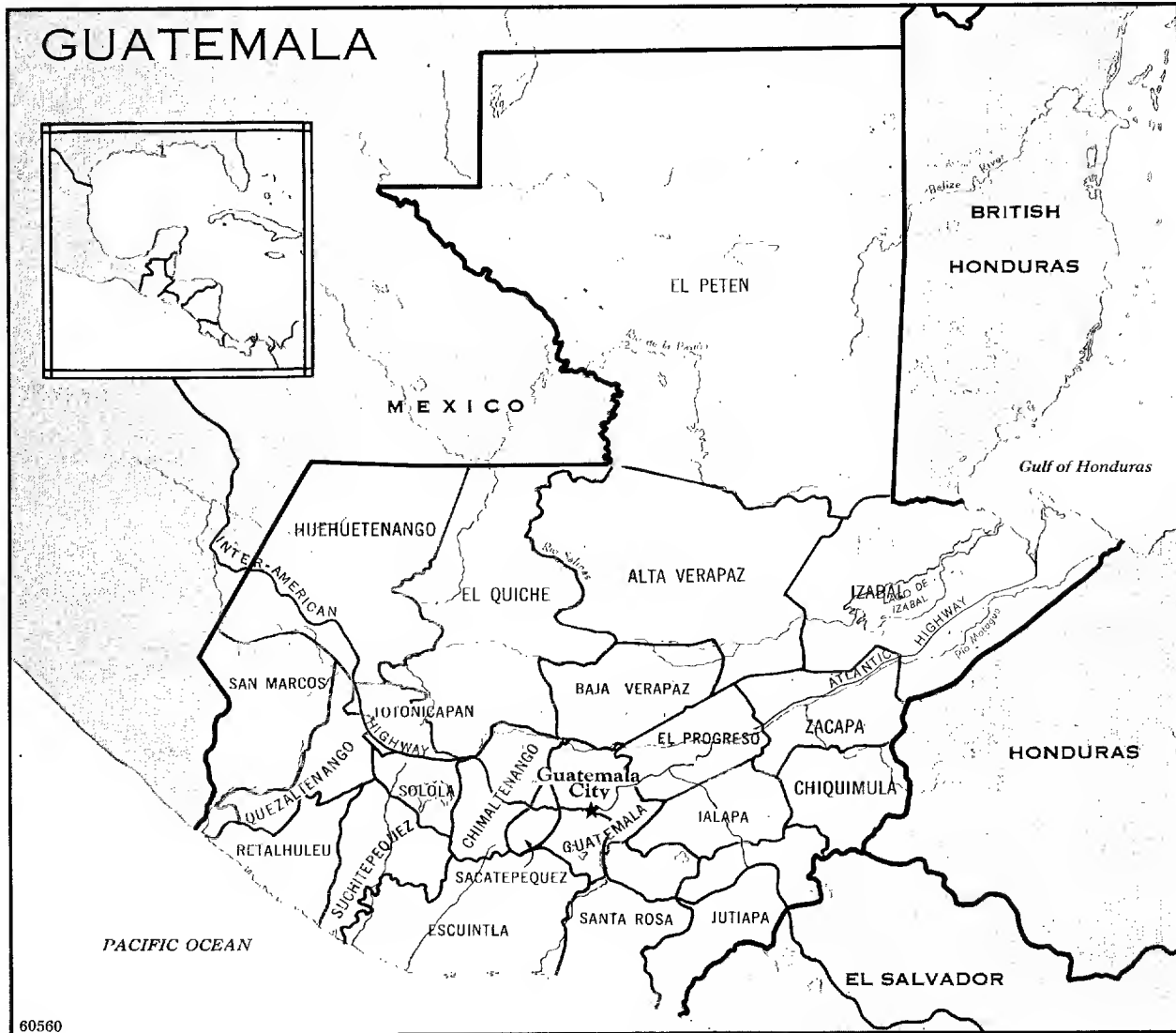
During his absence, Erich Honecker, Ulbricht's chief lieutenant, apparently has run the day-to-day affairs of the East German party, a function he has increasingly exercised in recent years as Ulbricht's pace of activity has slackened off. Honecker's audience with the Polish ambassador on 4 January also suggests he has assumed temporarily some of Ulbricht's functions as chief of state.

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Common Market: [The meeting on 17-18 January of the EEC Council in Luxembourg failed to break the deadlock in the Common Market.]

[France presented its demands aimed at curbing the EEC Commission's role and preventing the application of majority voting to vital questions. Moreover, the French proposed a timetable which would require initial agreement on these questions before Paris would resume its full participation in community activities.]

[The Five apparently found some of the proposals advanced by the French concerning the operations of the commission acceptable, but not the total package. Spaak offered a compromise on majority voting reportedly on behalf of all of the Five. According to one source, however, Couve made it clear that "France wants a veto." His timetable proposal--which implied the need for a change in commission personnel as well as for settlement of EEC agricultural financing--caused a particularly strong reaction from the Five.]

[On the basis of initial evaluations, some community sources believe that the French have already pulled back considerably from their initial demands regarding the commission. According to the US Mission, some also believe the French will be prepared to concede on majority voting as well, provided they can obtain agreement on a commission composed of "nonpolitical" personnel. Others feel, however, that De Gaulle will hold out for a permanent veto.]

[The permanent representatives of the Six will meet again the middle of next week, and the council session will resume on 28 January.]

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Dominican Republic: [Brazilian General Braga, the new commander of the Inter-American Peace Force (IAPF), informed the OAS Committee on 17 January that he is disposed against using the IAPF against the Dominican armed forces. This apparently reflects the Brazilian Government's view that the armed forces are the only organized Dominican institution capable of preventing a Communist takeover.]

[Braga also sees his mission as one of close cooperation with the OAS Committee and views the present government of the Dominican Republic as sovereign. Ambassador Bunker states that Braga appears more relaxed than his predecessor and should prove easier to work with.]

[*In the meantime, two apparently unrelated incidents of violence in Santo Domingo during the night of 18-19 January involving Dominican army personnel and individuals close to Juan Bosch could easily provoke reprisals and stiffen rebel intransigence to further negotiations. Juan Bosch's son, Leon, was seriously wounded and is reportedly near death.]

[*President Garcia Godoy, however, apparently feels that these incidents have not yet affected the problem of Caamano's departure.]

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Cuba: Cuba has announced formation of a Latin American Solidarity Organization with headquarters in Havana. A nine-member committee was created to cooperate with the "most active anti-imperialist groups with extensive popular roots," and to plan the organization's first conference for 1967. This development, coming in the wake of the Tri-Continent Conference and Fidel Castro's most explicit call for armed revolution in more than a year, indicates renewed Cuban interest in insurgent activities throughout the hemisphere.

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Bolivia: General Barrientos has informed the minister of government that he will return to Bolivia about 3 February to campaign for the July presidential election. Barrientos has been in Switzerland since 7 January after resigning the junta co-presidency under heavy pressure from the military to conform to the constitutional requirement that presidential candidates relinquish public office six months before elections. He has instructed his followers to prepare a public welcome, and will probably announce his candidacy shortly after his return.

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Australia: Federal Treasurer Harold Holt, the deputy leader of the Liberal Party who is to succeed retiring Prime Minister Menzies, will perpetuate the staunchly pro-Western policies of his predecessor, including military commitments to the defense of Malaysia and South Vietnam. The new leader will inherit the problem of composing differences with the Country Party, the junior member of the coalition which has dominated national politics since 1949. The opposition Labor Party is ill prepared to capitalize upon the leadership change because of its own poor public image and its lack of political acuity.

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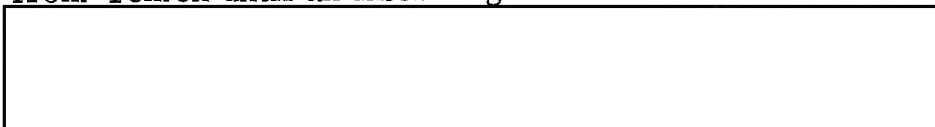


Yemen: Disagreement between Saudi Arabia and Egypt may delay the reconvening of the Harad peace conference for some time. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] the Saudis will not agree to resume the conference between Yemeni royalists and republicans until a detailed agreement is reached with Cairo on the shape of the interim government that is to be formed. At the moment, with the conference in recess, the Saudis are waiting for Nasir to respond to their latest proposals concerning this government or to offer proposals of his own. However, Nasir has informed King Faysal that he cannot begin withdrawing Egyptian troops from Yemen until an interim government is formed.

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